News release

Bigger and better computer for the Met Office

17 June 2002

The Met Office today named the NEC Corporation as the supplier of its next supercomputer.

By March 2004, a supercomputer made up of 30 NEC SX-6 nodes will be running at the Met Office's new HQ site in Exeter. This will deliver approximately six times the combined power of the Met Office's two current Cray T3E computers when used for weather forecasting and climate modelling. A year later, more nodes will be added, taking the total power available to twelve and a half times the current system.

Weather forecasts will benefit from the extra power, which will mean increased accuracy and detail in the models run by the supercomputer. These models will provide improved forecasts of high-impact weather, building on data available from a new generation of satellites. Climate change predictions will become even more authoritative through increases in resolution, representation of new processes and the use of ensemble predictions to provide risk assessments.

Alan Douglas, a Met Office Director, said: "This gives a clear statement about the Met Office's commitment to remain the acknowledged world leader in both numerical weather prediction and prediction of climate change over the coming years, and should ensure that our new facilities at Exeter remain at the cutting edge."

Notes

NEC Corporation is a leading provider of Internet solutions, dedicated to meeting the specialised needs of its customers in the key computer network and electron device fields.

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